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THE LAMB OF GOD



WE WOULD SEE JESUS
JOHN XII. 21.



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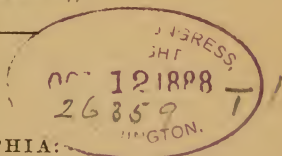
MAY I NOT? OR, TWO WAYS OF LOOKING
THROUGH A TELESCOPE.

WHAT CAN I DO?
(A QUESTION FOR PROFESSING CHRISTIANS.)

DIDLEY DUMPS, THE NEWSBOY.

FROM SHORE TO SHORE; OR, THE VOYAGE
OF LIFE.

*Frederick
Ketchford Starr.*



PHILADELPHIA:

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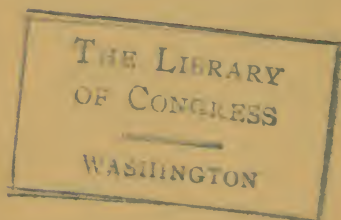
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He is despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from Him.

He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.
—ISAIAH 53 : 3, 7.

Him hath God exalted with His right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.—ACTS 5 : 31.

I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord.—REV. 14 : 13.

THE few incidents in the life of our Saviour, so imperfectly sketched in this little book, are placed before the reader in the hope that they may induce him to prayerfully study the inspired volume, and, from the fountain-head, get a full and accurate account of the sayings and doings of our Lord, thus obeying His command, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me."

The Bible interprets itself, and will make all essential matters plain to those who study it in a right spirit, and in the firm belief that they will there find "eternal life."

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CHAPTER I.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.—

JAMES 1:17.

“For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies,
Christ, our God, to Thee we raise
This our sacrifice of praise.”

IT pleased God, in infinite mercy, to provide this gloriously-beautiful world as our probationary abiding-place. Did we appreciate this blessing as we should, our happiness in this life would be far greater than it is. Our daily cares would weigh less heavily, and our many mercies would be more enjoyed, because traced directly to the source from whence they come.

The goodness of God is so apparent in His works that the soul must indeed be cold and dreary that does not realize this, and gratefully respond to the Giver of all good for the mercies vouchsafed by Him.

We cannot sufficiently thank God for the blessings He has so graciously and bountifully con-

ferred upon us, nor for the glorious promises He has so freely made to us.

The earth and sky seem to rival each other in proving not only the majesty of the Creator, but His condescending love in forming them for our benefit and enjoyment.

The humblest flower in the valley, no less than the stately oak upon the hill-top, proclaims God's loving messages to us. Their voices are in sweet accord with those of the heavens, ever vocal in praising Him who made them, and telling of His wondrous love and tender mercy. In Bible language, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth His handywork."

Great as was the love that formed and beautified our world, it has since shone more resplendently. Redemptive love surpassed creative love. "God so loved the world" that He permitted the death of His Son to rescue it, when it could be saved in no other way. The inspired volume follows this astounding declaration with the following explanation, as though it were necessary to prove that divine love could not only forbear to punish, but would pardon and bless the guilty: "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."

"'Twas great to speak a world from naught;
'Twas greater to redeem."

Never till we enter heaven shall we begin to comprehend what a debt of gratitude we owe to our blessed Redeemer.

"It may be wrong, and yet I would not be
An angel, formed in spotless purity;
It may seem strange, yet with my sins and cares,
I would not change my lot in Christ for theirs.
They in the light of God will ever glow,
Yet joys are mine which they can never know.
They, since He made them first, have ever been
Viewing His love, no earthly veil between;
In *that*, from age to age, they still abide,
Drink of its fullness, and are satisfied.
Yet even *they* bend down new depths to see,—
New depths of love, the love that ransomed me.
Sweet are their songs; yet not to them is given
To sing the song of the redeemed in heaven.
Bright are their crowns, their harps are shining gold,
Yet in their hands no victor's palm they hold;
No wreath they weave such as shall clasp the brow
Of those who pass through tribulation now.
Their robes are white, yet they shall fade beside
The robes that Jesus' blood hath purified.
They *near* Him stand, but for His bride *alone*
Remains the place the nearest to His throne;
To her alone it shall be given to rest
Upon His arm, and lean upon His breast."

We are justly called upon to bless God "for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings

of this life; but above all, for His inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace and for the hope of glory." There could be no "means of grace" nor "hope of glory" were it not for Christ; and yet how sad it is that He is so seldom in our thoughts, and, if loved at all, loved with such a cold, wavering love!

It will be our fault, as well as our loss, if the blessings offered us in and through Christ are not secured by us. We are not only authorized, but specially invited, to look to Him for salvation. His "above all" precious gift of salvation, and His "inestimable love" in having purchased our redemption at such a fearful cost to Himself, are enough to secure our deepest and abiding affection for Him.

Without Christ all must inevitably be spiritual death. With Him we have truest enjoyment of this world, and in the world to come, life eternal.

There are three versions of the first line of that beautiful hymn,

"Jesus, *lover* of my soul."

Another version reads,

"Jesus, *refuge* of my soul;"

and a third says,

"Jesus, *Saviour* of my soul."

A beautiful trinity of titles—" Lover," " Refuge," " Saviour"! Precious links in the chain that securely binds the storm-tossed soul to the anchor within the haven of eternal rest.

On a lovely summer evening, a few years ago, the passengers on board a steamer on the Potomac river were electrified by the peculiarly rich and soul-stirring strains in which one of America's noted singers breathed forth this prayer in song—

" Jesus, lover of my soul."

All in that crowd of listeners were spell-bound; every heart was thrilled. A gentleman from the outer circle made his way to the singer and asked him if he had served in the northern army during the civil war. On being answered in the affirmative, the gentleman said that he had fought on the southern side, and one bright night, concealed by a shadow, approached quite near to him when he was on picket duty, and heard him humming the tune just sung; that he aimed at his heart, and was about to pull the trigger when there came to him in the death-like stillness of that memorable night—

" Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing,"

and that he could not fire. The singer replied that he well remembered that night as one in which he had been unusually depressed, and that his only comfort was in committing his soul to God in the hymn he was humming.

Were it not for our implicit confidence in the love of Christ, we could not seek refuge in Him; nor would we go to Him in our extremity did we not trust in Him as our Saviour.

“’Twas He who found me on the deathly wild,
And made me heir of heaven, the Father’s child;
And day by day, whereby my soul may live,
Gives me His grace of pardon, and will give.

“Yea, Thou wilt answer for me, righteous Lord:
Thine all the merit, mine the great reward;
Thine the sharp thorns, and mine the golden crown;
Mine the life won, and Thine the life laid down.”

It is not enough to know of the love of Christ. To trust in Him fully, we must implicitly believe in His power, His almightiness. His “still small voice,” so full of peace and comfort, has in it the majesty and might of God. What though the lightning rends the heavens, and its accompanying artillery shakes the earth to its centre? From the lips of Him who bade the angry waves of Galilee “Be still,” we have the comforting assur-

ance, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me." In this loving whisper, which no thunder can drown, Christ tells the distressed soul that it may well tremble in view of the power of God to punish those who do not seek divine protection, but that it may have the same confidence in His might that it has in that of God; that though God is mighty to punish the guilty, He, Christ, is equally mighty to save all who put their trust in Him.

But for our knowledge of and confidence in the God Christ, where could we look, upon whom could we depend, in time of danger? Our comfort is in His love, our safety in His might. "Other refuge have we none."

Great as was the privilege to be with Christ as were those who associated with Him when on earth, we are infinitely more highly favored in being permitted to look upon Him as He is presented to us in the Holy Scriptures, and to learn of Him as He is there revealed to us. His declaration was, "Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

It in no way detracts from the sacredness of the Bible to reverently review it as a glorious

and instructive picture-book. It is "the book" in this as in all other respects. It is full of soul-inspiring pictures, drawn by the pen of inspiration. They illustrate its teachings and rivet them upon our memories and in our hearts. Many who with feeble steps are approaching the termination of a long and useful life, remember more distinctly than any other event of their childhood, the delight it afforded them to sit in their mother's lap and listen to her explanation of the pictures in the large family Bible, as she reverently turned over the sacred pages, and Sunday after Sunday thus gave them their first religious instruction. Such lessons, however crude the pictures which illustrate them, have left their indelible impression upon the memory of many, and have ever since influenced the hearts and lives of not a few.

CHAPTER II.

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.—MATT. 2 : 10.

“As, with gladness, men of old
Did the guiding star behold ;
As, with joy, they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright ;
So, most gracious Lord, may we
Evermore be led to Thee.”

THE most conspicuous of Bible pictures—one that sheds its lustre upon all the others ; we will call it the grand frontispiece—is that of our blessed Lord. As we gaze upon it, from some of the many points of view in which it may be seen, let our prayer be that He “who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,” may so shine in our hearts as “to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

Great benefit may be derived from the study of the numerous types and figures in which our Saviour is presented to us in the Scriptures, such as

“THE CHIEF CORNER-STONE.”—The only foundation upon which we can safely build our hopes of a home in heaven. “Other foundation

can no man lay." God need not, and therefore will not, lay any other.

"THE GOOD SHEPHERD."—So "good" as to lay down His life for His sheep; and whose rod and staff will so comfort us in passing through "the valley of the shadow of death," that we "will fear no evil." That valley cannot be safely crossed without His aid.

"THE TRUE VINE."—Whose leaf shall not wither, and whose fruit will ripen throughout eternity.

"THE DOOR."—Hinged on divine mercy, and ever open to all believers. The only condition being, "BY ME, if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

"THE ROCK."—The Church's only foundation, against which the waves of persecution dash in vain.

A lifetime may be profitably devoted to the study of these and numerous other titles of our blessed Redeemer. Eternity will not exhaust them; and what an eternity that will be,—“to be forever with the Lord,” learning more, and yet always more, of

“The old, old story of Jesus and His love.”

Old, yet ever new and soul-inspiring. We can-

not have a well-grounded hope of participating in this heavenly joy unless we, in this life, know of Christ, and secure a personal interest in Him.

Those who would profit by their contemplated voyage to Europe studiously apply themselves to the study of the history of such countries as they expect to visit, and "read up the old masters," so as to be prepared to appreciate their works of art. Familiarity with the lives and works of Fra Angelico, Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Titian, Raphael, Rubens and others, creates an interest in their paintings and sculpture which cannot otherwise be enjoyed. Nor can we duly honor the great men of modern times unless we know of the deeds which have made them great. It is said of Thorwaldsen that *probably the most perfect piece of marble ever wrought by human hands is his statue of the Christ. Those who have seen it in the Metropolitan Church at Copenhagen say that the whole light of the story of the gospel seems to stream down upon them from the stone as they look at it.

Those who would profit by the teachings of the Scriptures must in like manner make a careful

* *Silent Times*, by the Rev. J. R. Miller, D.D.

study of them, unbiased by their own prejudiced opinions, which are sure to so pervert the truth as to make the Bible teach just what they prefer should be taught. We must go to the Bible for our opinions, not with our opinions, and prayerfully search its sacred pages for instruction and guidance.

We are too apt to be governed by popular opinion. To blindly follow the multitude, and applaud, because it applauds, evidences neither intelligence nor appreciation. It is nothing more than a blind, ungoverned excitement. The lowest order of intellect can fully equal the highest in mere outward demonstration. As a general rule it greatly exceeds it. No reliance can be placed upon it. It is as unstable as the wind. The multitude that shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David," had no sooner done so than it as loudly clamored for His death. Their "Crucify Him, crucify Him" gave sad proof of their ignorance of Him.

As we are about to enter the Scripture gallery to look upon some of the pictures or scenes of our blessed Lord, we shall do well to first learn of Him as He is revealed to us in the Old Testament.

We get but little more than half way through the first chapter of our Bible, when we read that "God said, Let Us make man in OUR image." Here we find the first reference to Christ.

God had spoken into existence the firmaments—sky, earth and sea—and all the "living creatures" belonging to them. His mandate, "Let there be," at once produced each as named by Him. All preparation having thus been made for the comfort and happiness of man, God, as it were, held a council with the other members of the Trinity, and said, "Let Us make man in OUR image." No human hand must attempt to draw aside the curtain which hides from our view the doings in heaven. It is enough for us to know that God the Son, who was to redeem us, and God the Holy Ghost, the "blessed Comforter," who was thereafter to "abide with us forever," took part in our creation. Was it because we were given an immortal soul, and therefore, like God, are to live forever, that we were created in His image?

The next Scripture reference to the Son of God is in the third chapter of Genesis. We are not informed that Adam and Eve understood it and took comfort from it. Some writers think that such was the case. If so, they certainly went

out of the garden with hearts less burdened than they would otherwise have been. It was their only ray of hope.

Numerous Old Testament prophecies foretell the coming of the promised Messiah, and the errand upon which He would come.

Isaiah makes frequent mention of Him who was to "Proclaim liberty to the captives."

"The government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

Jeremiah says that His name shall be called

"THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

David's harp never sounds more sweetly than when tuned in praise of Him "that cometh in the name of the Lord." Who can listen to the twenty-third psalm without being touched by it? We cannot be too thankful for the possessive pronoun in its opening sentence. It warrants our making a personal application of the blessings with which the psalm is so richly stored, and which have encouraged more souls than, perhaps, any other portion of Scripture.

Old and young, rich and poor, the humblest and the most exalted of our race, find in it just

the comfort and strength they severally need. The good Shepherd leads His flock to the richest pastures without distinction. Happen what may, the same trusting assurance, "I shall not want," comes from hovel and from palace.

If the last words of the late Kaiser William were correctly transmitted to us from Berlin, that excellent monarch was greatly comforted when his spiritual adviser read this psalm to him as he was passing into the presence of the King of kings. A fit ending for one who at the time of his confirmation, in early youth, wrote out the principles on which he resolved to govern his life, one of which was, "I will begin every morning of my life with devotional thoughts of God Almighty."

Passing on to the New Testament, we find it well stored with proofs of the Messiahship of Christ, and of the events in His life while on earth.

Never were more truthful words spoken than those uttered in derision by the chief priests and others of Christ when upon the cross. "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." To "save others" was the sole object of His coming to earth. The sacrifice of Himself was the cost at which He undertook our redemption.

It is indeed a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." In return for what He has done for us, may we "ever hereafter serve Him," not merely with our lips, but in "newness of life."

As we proceed to learn of Christ in the following pictures of Him, let us remember that we all have a direct personal interest in Him. We can each say, as we look upon Him, "For me He died." May not a few be able truthfully to add, from personal experience, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace"?

Saint John brings the Saviour beautifully and forcibly to our notice in the twenty-ninth verse of the first chapter of his gospel. On the following day, as we learn in the thirty-sixth verse, John the Baptist reiterates his urgent appeal. Twice asked in this chapter to

"BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD,"

let us comply with the request, that we may learn of Him and profit by His teachings.

This picture, figuratively speaking, is painted by John the Baptist, and framed by the beloved disciple.

The wise men, commissioned by Herod to “search diligently” for the infant Christ, under the pretence that he too would “worship” Him, hasten on to Bethlehem of Judæa, whither they are miraculously guided, and ask, “Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him.”

“With exceeding great joy” they find the object of their search, and adoringly prostrate themselves before Him, and present to Him the gifts—“gold, and frankincense, and myrrh”—which they had brought with them from their eastern home for that purpose. So says Saint Matthew.

Saint Luke introduces into his picture of this scene the shepherds to whom the angel of the Lord had conveyed these “good tidings of great joy.” They “came with haste” so soon as heaven’s song of “Glory to God in the highest” had been sung by the “multitude of the heavenly host” that accompanied the angel.

This is the first view we have of “the Lamb of God.” Though a helpless infant, cradled in a manger, He is the acknowledged King of kings. Faith detects in His swaddling-clothes the spotless robe of holy royalty.

They were “wise men” who first sought the

Saviour. They did not seek Him from motives of curiosity or indifference, but to pay Him the homage due unto Him. Saint Paul told the Corinthians that "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble ARE CALLED." Let us hope that such is not now the case to the extent it was in the apostle's day. Paul was one of the most prominent of the few exceptions, and fully competent to form an opinion upon the subject. Though there are by no means as many wise and mighty ones following Christ to-day as should do so, yet He ranks among His chosen ones some—not a few—of the noblest of our race, who count it their highest honor to submit to His laws and to devote themselves to His service.

"Daily living seemeth weary
To the one who never works;
Duty always seemeth dreary
To the one who duty shirks.

"Only after hardest striving
Cometh sweet and perfect rest;
Life is found to be worth living
To the one who does his best."

It had been revealed to good old Simeon that he should not see death till he had seen "the Lord's Christ;" and when he was, at last, favored

with that glorious and long-desired sight, in the person of the eight-day-old babe reverently held in his fond embrace, his emotion found vent in the prayer, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

What a sublime picture that aged servant of God must have presented as he embraced the infant in whom he recognized his divine Lord and Master, for whose coming his life had been prolonged! He was so overpowered by the sight, so abundantly satisfied, and so fully ripe for heaven, that he prayed he might be permitted to at once enter his eternal home. The object of his life had been gained, his fondest hopes had been realized.

Why has this scene been so minutely recorded in the Scriptures, unless it is to teach us that those who accept Christ as their Saviour, and trust implicitly in Him, are thereby prepared for death at any moment, come when and as it may? "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace." To be ever ready "now," is to be always ready. Sudden death to the Christian is a sudden transition from earth to heaven, than which nothing can be more glorious or desirable. To be unprepared to die, is to be unprepared to live.

CHAPTER III.

*Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness
arise.*—MAL. 4 : 2.

“True Sun ! illumine our inner sight ;
Pour down Thy Spirit’s living light :
Through all our senses, o’er our head,
Unsetting Sun ! Thy brightness shed.”

THE Scriptures relate but few of the incidents in the life of Christ which transpired in His youth ; but they tell all that it is necessary for us to know, and full enough for us to profit by. It is much to say that as He increased in years, He “increased in wisdom . . . and in favor with God and man.” If the youth of the present day so follow Him that the same can be said of them, it will indeed be well with them.

The only public act of our blessed Lord, until He was twenty-nine years of age, of which we have any Scripture record, took place in the temple at Jerusalem, whither He had accompanied His parents, who, as was their constant practice, went there to the feast of the passover. They make a day’s journey homeward, supposing that He was one of their party. Finding that such was not the case, they return to Jerusalem,

and, after searching for Him three days, find Him "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers." "Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing," is His mother's earnest appeal to Him. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" is His reply. "My Father's business!" What father? Certainly not Joseph! At this early period of His life we have from Christ's own lips this declaration of His godhead.

We next behold our Lord journeying from Galilee to Jordan, to be baptized of John. It was then that "the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him," and that God specially introduced and endorsed Him, if we may reverently so speak, by proclaiming from heaven, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

This special mark of divine favor, at this particular time, is significant. To-day, as then, special strength is often given for special trials that are about to come upon us. The Son of God was on the eve of a fearful conflict.

That He in whom God was well pleased, and upon whom the Holy Ghost had so recently de-

scended, should be tempted by the devil is indeed marvellous. Our blessed Lord had fasted forty days and forty nights. He was wearied and hungry. The arch fiend seeks this opportunity, leads Him into the wilderness, and sorely tempts Him. Dark deeds seek dark places, and the prince of darkness did his utmost to get the advantage of our Lord, but all in vain.

This desperate struggle between the representatives of heaven and hell must have been witnessed with the most intense interest by every occupant of both those abodes. It was no sooner over than "angels came and ministered unto Him" who had triumphed so gloriously. We are told that "the devil left Him," and he must have been glad to escape after so signal a defeat.

While this teaches us that Satan does not hesitate to attack the most righteous, even the Son of God, we cannot be too thankful that we have such proof that He who is for us is greater than he who is against us. Let us, when tempted, remember this, and seek refuge in Him who has given such proof of His power to overcome the evil one. It has been truthfully and beautifully said that "the crucible proves the gold, the field of battle proves the soldier, the storm-tossed ocean proves the sailor, and temptation proves

the Christian." Christ, having endured temptation, knows our need of Him at such times, and will assuredly sympathize with and sustain all who put their trust in Him. It must, however, be remembered that we are to do our part before we can expect divine assistance. To parley with Satan, and suppose that God will keep us from harm, is to disregard His warning, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." The most effectual way to resist him is in the free use of the weapon with which our Saviour conquered him. No weapon is so dreaded by him as is the Bible.

Our blessed Lord goes into Galilee, and finding Philip bids him follow Him, which he at once does, and with such earnestness that he urges Nathanael, who did not believe in the "son of Joseph," nor that any good could "come out of Nazareth," to "come and see" for himself. Nathanael's confession, "Rabbi, thou ART the Son of God: thou ART the King of Israel," tells the rest of the story.

If those who profess to be followers of Christ would, like Philip, urge unbelievers to go to Jesus and decide for themselves who and what He is, and whether or not it is for their interest to enlist in His cause, they would do far more for their divine Master, and for the souls of their

fellow creatures, than can possibly be accomplished by mere argument.

To those who have not identified themselves with the cause of Christ let it be said, Do not make the mistake of keeping away from Him because many who profess to be His are, as you suppose, so full of faults. Look not at the "imperfections of church members," but at the Lamb of God. If you demand perfection, you will find it in Him. He is your *pattern* as well as your Saviour.

Never mind the weak human instruments God may employ to win you to Himself. If you were perishing from thirst, you would pay little or no regard to the vessel which contained the water you craved. Your only concern would be to get enough.

What would be thought of the loyalty of a man who, though thoroughly satisfied with the estimable character of his sovereign, deemed the disaffection of others a sufficient cause for withholding his allegiance? It need not be asked where are his honor and his manliness. They lie trampled in the dust.

The most manly thing a man can do is to give his heart to God; the most unmanly and unjustifiable is to withhold it. An army officer, whose

lot it was to lead a forlorn hope so desperate that death seemed the inevitable result to all who were to be engaged in it, was advised by some brother officers to employ the brief interval in prayer. This he would not do, though the Scriptures sanction such a course up to the eleventh or last hour. His argument was that he had all through life neglected God, and would not so insult Him as to offer Him the dregs of it. His Maker's claims upon him had been sinfully neglected, but never for a moment disputed.

There are vast numbers of high-toned men who would suffer death in its most aggravated form rather than knowingly do this wrong. It is with them as it was with Saint Paul before his change. All they need is to realize their obligations to their Creator and Redeemer. With their influence in the right scale, the prayer, "Thy kingdom come," could be easily prayed.

Can there be a greater folly than to argue that we keep away from Christ *because* some who profess to be His followers are, in our opinion, false to their profession, as though the fault were His? It should be an incentive to us to do all in our power to counterbalance their wrong by embracing His cause and being true to Him.

Nathanael had probably seen many faults in

the former life of Philip. It was not Philip, but Philip's God, that satisfied him.

Behold the Lamb of God at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, where He performed His first miracle.

Many seize upon this portion of Scripture in the endeavor to make it an authority for their ungodly dissipation. Would that they did not overlook or disregard the all-important admonition it contains, "Whatsoever He [Jesus] saith unto you, do it."

Those who profess to FOLLOW Christ are where they should not be, if where He is an unwelcomed guest. To be consistent they must not go, nor desire to go, where He will not accompany them.

To 'follow' Christ where Christ has never led;
To quote as Christ's what Christ has never said;
Impossible, untrue.

The Buddhists, true to their creed, are votaries or followers of Buddha, and glory in being such. So with Mohammedans, who as devoutly follow their Allah; but can it be as truthfully said that professing Christians are, as a class, what their name indicates—votaries or followers of Christ? To be a professing Christian too often means noth-

ing more than that one is not an Atheist nor a Hottentot. We should ever remember that Christ is "the way," as well as "the truth and the life." There is no other way to heaven.

It is a fearfully sad and fearfully common mistake to suppose that Christ must be excluded from our society when we meet together for pleasure. There is both pleasure and profit in having Him with us on such occasions. They must be sadly forgetful of what He has done to secure our happiness who doubt this. He would have us all happy ; and there is no such unalloyed enjoyment of this life as that which flows from our companionship with Him.

Why is it that so many, some doubtless unconscious of the fact, treat Him as an object to be shunned so long as they are in health, but whose pardon and support must be sought when death approaches ?

It does not seem to be the highest type of honor to eagerly seize every blessing we can secure from a friend whose influence places many favors in our way, and whose generosity lavishly bestows them upon us, and yet make no acknowledgment of His kindness. We would not so treat an earthly friend. Why, then, so treat our heavenly benefactor ?

CHAPTER IV.

Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.—MATT. 11 : 28.

“To Thee they went, the blind, the dumb,
The palsied and the lame,
The leper with his tainted life,
The sick with fevered frame.
And lo! Thy touch brought life and health,
Gave speech and strength and sight;
And youth renewed, and frenzy calmed,
Owned Thee, the Lord of light.”

A LEPER meets Jesus and worships Him. Having discharged this duty, he then tells of his sad condition, and says that he has no hope of being cured except in the divine will. “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.” His restoration to health depends solely upon the will and power of Christ. “If Thou wilt, Thou canst.” He is fully persuaded that nothing more is wanting than a willingness on the part of the God-man who stood before him, and in whom he had unbounded faith. The answer harmonizes with the prayer, “I will; be thou clean.” Though an immediate cure was thus wrought, “Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him.”

Leprosy was looked upon by the Jews as a

special mark of God's displeasure, and was called "The stroke or wound of the Lord." Miriam, Gehazi and Uzziah were smitten with it for sins they had committed. One of the first miracles of Him who came to pardon sin was to give this proof of His power to do away with the effect of sin.

Israel's king was greatly distressed when Syria's favorite general handed him a letter from his master asking him to "recover him of his leprosy," and exclaimed, "AM I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?" The fact that Christ had this power is a proof that He was God.

An unusual scene takes place in the synagogue at Capernaum, in the midst of our Lord's discourse there on a Sabbath day. One at least in that congregation knows Christ, and publicly acknowledges Him, but not in a manner calculated or intended to promote the devotional exercises in which the people were engaged. A cry is heard, "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." It is an oft-repeated quotation, "The devils believe and tremble." Here

we have that fact illustrated. The words of the Master seem to have been too powerful and too pointed. The "unclean spirit" could be silent no longer. His hatred and dread of Christ must have vent. This is the first time, so far as is known, that the Saviour was called "Jesus of Nazareth," and it was doubtless intended to impress upon those who heard it the humble birth or origin of Christ; yet, at the same time, is extorted from the evil one the confession that Christ is "The Holy One of God."

It is not to be supposed that the poor man under Satanic influence was taken to the synagogue to be benefited by the services there. It was to oppose Christ. Our Lord's rebuke, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him," was all-sufficient to restore order and to release the one possessed of the devil, as well as to manifest to all present Christ's power to destroy the works of Satan. 'Tis useless for the evil spirit to plead with Christ, "Let us alone." This our compassionate Lord will not do. The question, "Art Thou come to destroy us?" is fully answered in the result. This "new doctrine," as His power over the devil was termed, spread the fame of Christ throughout all the region round about Galilee. The Bible tells us that God will make "the wrath of man to praise

Him." He often makes the wrath of the devil to do so, as in this case.

On another occasion two demoniacs of uncommon fierceness meet our Lord, and use very much the same language as did the one in the synagogue. "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?" Yes! Our Lord had undoubtedly gone to where they were having everything their own way, for the very purpose of destroying them, and He speedily accomplished that work. It was God's time to dispose of them, whatever may have been meant by "the time" to which they referred.

A paralytic is brought to Jesus by friends whose faith overcomes the many obstacles in their way. "When they could not come nigh unto Him for the press, they uncovered the roof where He was," and lowered the sick man to His feet. "Jesus seeing THEIR faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." Here we have a very remarkable and affecting picture of the Lamb of God. It shows what a magic and mighty power there is in faith. "Jesus seeing THEIR faith."

Have any of us relatives or friends in distress, and have we taken them, in the arms of faith, to Jesus? If not, why not, when we have such encouragement as is here given?

With such a picture before them, Christians have no excuse for not taking their unconverted relatives and companions to a throne of grace, and there, offering up the prayer of faith on their behalf.* A careful study of this picture will convince all that "according to their faith it shall be done" unto them, whether they pray for themselves or others.

We do not know that this sick man asked or expected to be healed. Though the Scriptures are silent upon this point, the inference is that he did not ask. He may have been too ill to do so. Be this as it may, it was the faith of those who took him to Jesus that led Him to restore the sick to health.

Deprive the Christian of the right to pray for others, and you rob him of all his power in prayer, for it would be useless for him to plead for himself if he could not do so on behalf of others. Our Bible not only authorizes but instructs us to "pray one for another," and adds, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." *How* much, it is impossible for

us to imagine. God's limits far exceed the boundary of man's conjecture.

Christian parents should ever keep before them this picture of our blessed Lord. It teaches them that, so long as they are spared to pray for their children, they wield a power that is irresistible. If called upon to sorrow because of the waywardness of a loved but wicked child, they need not despair. If they have but faith, Jesus will be sure to see it, and be influenced by it.

What is faith? It is much more than a mere passive belief. From the highest authority we learn that it is "the SUBSTANCE of things hoped for, the EVIDENCE of things not seen." We may hold in our hand a delicious peach, and greatly admire its rich fragrance and its delicate blush. We *believe* it to be a peach, because we have been so told, though we may never have eaten one; but this does not satisfy our desire for the "hoped for" fruit. If we eat it, we have the "substance" of it. The Scripture invitation is "Taste and see that the Lord is good."

A lad was seen standing with his hands and head uplifted. A passer-by looked up, but could not see anything to attract the attention of the lad, and asked him what he was doing. "I am

flying a kite," was his reply. "How do you know that you are doing so? no kite is in sight." "Ah, sir, I know it, for *the kite pulls, and I feel it.*" Here was the "evidence" of what was not seen. When we feel Christ at our heart-strings, all doubts vanish.

The twenty-second verse of the twenty-first chapter of Matthew embraces, within a dozen words, a complete sermon upon faith, and forcibly illustrates it. Jesus there tells us—not that "all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, ye shall receive:" there is no such promise in the Bible; the promise is, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, BELIEVING, ye shall receive." An active, BELIEVING faith is the key that unlocks this mystery. Such faith is given to those only whose desires are sanctified and therefore subordinate to those of God.

There is every variety of faith, so called, from the true standard to that of the mother who agreed with her son that they should that night, before retiring to rest, pray for the removal of a hill between her cottage and the adjacent village. Her argument was that God had said that faith would remove mountains. She wanted the objectionable hill out of the way, not for the glory of God, but for her own personal gratification.

The prayer was said by both parent and child; but saying a prayer is not necessarily praying. The son was aroused early the next morning by his mother's boisterous call, "There is that hill, just as I knew it would be."

A poor cripple lingers wearily at Bethesda's pool, unable to reach the waters in time to be cured by them. It is not the season for the healing angel to make his accustomed visit, and so "trouble the water" that whoever first reached it was cured of whatever disease he had. His case seems utterly hopeless; but "man's extremity is God's opportunity." Though no earthly friend is at hand, nor any of the angelic host, one who is more than human, and whom angels worship, is approaching, on His way to Jerusalem, and the lonely sufferer will not have to wait much longer.

He who is ever busy seeking and relieving those in distress is sure to see this object of commiseration, and sure to befriend him. Behold your Saviour as He compassionately stops to speak to this weary one, who for thirty-eight years has borne his infirmity. Listen to His question. It is not "How long have you suffered?" nor "Do you suffer much?" His name is not asked, nor is

his dwelling-place; but the inquiry is, "Wilt thou be made whole?" "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but, while I am coming, another steppeth down before me," is the melancholy answer. "Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked."

Many are called upon in the mysterious but unerring providence of God to suffer long and severely; but the blessed Comforter is sure to appear, at what He knows to be the best time and best way, bringing the needed relief.

A man with a withered hand has his faith tested by being told to stretch it forth. He does not argue that it is impossible for him to comply with so unreasonable and unnatural a request—that his hand is withered, and that he is, therefore, unable to extend it. He simply does as he is commanded. "He stretched it forth," and with that effort came the cure. "It was restored whole, like as the other." Heaven issues no command without, at the same time, supplying all needed help for its complete and immediate execution.

Our Lord, in this instance, accepted as it were

a challenge from the Pharisees upon the observance of the Sabbath. He first convinced them from the Scriptures, by answering their remonstrance against His hungry disciples for plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath, with the question, "Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered, and they that were with him?" He next reasoned that because He was "Lord even of the Sabbath day," He could lawfully do *His* work on that day. He then proved this by healing the withered hand of the man to whom they, in their challenge, had called His attention.

CHAPTER V.

They brought unto Him all that were diseased.—

MATT. 14 : 35.

“O Saviour Christ! our woes dispel;
For some are sick, and some are sad,
And some have never loved Thee well,
And some have lost the love they had;
And some have found the world is vain,
Yet from the world they break not free;
And some have friends who give them pain,
Yet have not sought a friend in Thee.”

To bring to our Lord a blind and dumb man, possessed with a devil, was certainly to place before Him one who could in no way plead for or help himself.

It is difficult to conceive of a more wretched, helpless person: his eyes sealed so that no ray of hope could be seen in any direction, and his tongue so bound that he could make no appeal for aid of any kind from any one. He was in the temporary possession, and under the control, of Satan. Yet happily he had friends who could aid him, and who proved true to him by taking him to Christ, who “healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.” Few as were the words spoken by our Lord, they

caused a vast deal to be said by the prejudiced Pharisees, who, because they could not deny that He cast out devils, strove to make it appear that such miracles were wrought by Beelzebub the prince of devils. Satan would indeed begin a new and blessed work, were he to commence the destruction of himself!

Behold the Lamb of God dispensing blessings to all who came in His way,—“Healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease,” thus extending His fame, and augmenting the numbers that gathered around Him from various parts of the country. “Seeing the multitudes,” He ascends His mountain-pulpit and preaches His first recorded sermon, so rich in blessings, so full of comfort and encouragement, and yet so fearlessly but tenderly denouncing wrong. A word in season for all classes of His hearers. The “poor in spirit” are told that “theirs is the kingdom of heaven;” others are warned that unless their “righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees,” they “shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” The admonitions and warnings, no less than the loving invitations, contained in that discourse, make it as perfect as the One from whose lips and heart it

came. No wonder "the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes."

On a subsequent occasion it was said of Him, "Never man spake like this man." With equal truth it might have been added, "nor performed such glorious deeds as He."

As Jesus enters Capernaum, He is besought by a centurion to heal his palsied servant. Though not asked to do so, our compassionate Lord offers to go to the "grievously tormented" one and heal him; but the centurion's faith is such that he does not consider this necessary. A "word" from the heavenly Physician is, in his opinion, all-sufficient; and so it proved. The desired cure was made "in the self-same hour" in which it was spoken. There is something touchingly beautiful in the argument used by the centurion why Jesus need not do more than "speak the word," and thereby accomplish the desired cure. If he, a mere man, could so command those under him to do his bidding, that every want was thus gratified, surely Christ could in like manner command the disease and it must obey Him. It must instantly vanish if He so ordered it. Though a man of authority, surrounded by a retinue of

soldiers and servants, he is so genuinely humble as to feel himself unworthy to have Christ come under his roof. Our Lord speaks of this faith as surpassing any He had ever seen. Those who blush to speak the name of Jesus may learn a profitable lesson from this truly noble centurion.

The day after that on which our Saviour cured the centurion's servant, He entered the city of Nain, accompanied by many of His disciples and "much people." As He approaches the gates of the city He meets a funeral procession. Though many citizens attend it, they are evidently led to do so, not because of the rank or influence of the departed one, but from sympathy for the sorrowing and widowed mother who is following the corpse of her only son to its grave. The great, loving heart of Jesus, ever in sympathy with those in distress, prompts Him to give the much-needed aid to this lonely mourner. "Weep not" were, so far as we know, the only words spoken to the mother, but they were the words of Christ, which, be they few or many, are always full of love and power. He would not have asked that mother to cease weeping had He not intended to remove the burden which forced the tears from her aching heart. The stream must be stopped at the

fountain-head. The heavenly Comforter then approaches the bier. Those who bear it stand still, unasked to do so, but impelled by a resistless influence which comes over them. The Lord of life and death utters the command, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." "He that was dead sat up, and began to speak." Christ "delivered him to his mother," are the few remaining words which place before us this truly wonderful picture. The results of this event are told us. "There came a fear on all," as well it might. The tidings swept "throughout all Judæa and throughout all the region round about" like a mighty avalanche. They reach John the Baptist, who commissioned two of his disciples to go and ascertain whether the wonder-working stranger was THE ONE for whose coming he looked. Jesus tells them to return to John and inform him what they have seen and heard. Actions speak louder than words. "The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

The picture of Jairus, first worshipping our Lord, then immediately thereafter pleading with Him on behalf of his "little daughter" (his only daughter, about twelve years of age), who was at

the point of death, if not already dead, is one of peculiar interest. It is so interwoven with another incident of equal interest, as to blend the two into one.

Our Lord at once accompanied the distressed father to his house. On His way there, Christ suddenly realizes that some one in the crowd which surrounded Him has clandestinely extracted a cure from His sacred person. Turning immediately around, He discovered the one who had touched but the hem of His garment, and was thereby cured of a sad affliction from which she had suffered for twelve years, having been taken ill the year in which the child He was on His way to see was born. Our Lord utters only a few words, but they are full of comfort and sympathy. "Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole."

On His arrival at the ruler's house, our Lord found that many friends had gathered around the dead child. He also discovered that they did not have the confidence of the trusting father, whose faith had brought Him there; for when He spoke of restoring the dead to life they "laughed Him to scorn;" a laugh which was, however, soon turned into "great astonishment."

Overcome by the pressure made upon Him by the many sick and suffering ones who were brought to Him, but without leaving one of them uncured, Jesus seeks repose on the other side of the Sea of Galilee—repose so much needed that He falls into a deep sleep in the boat. The disciples become greatly alarmed by reason of a severe storm which has overtaken them. Though the tempest is so violent as to imperil the lives of all on board, Jesus sleeps on composedly till aroused by His terror-stricken companions, who imploringly ask, "Carest thou not that we perish?" Our Saviour arises and rebukes the wind, and says unto the sea, "Peace, be still." Of course the warring elements recognize and obey their Creator. Why, then, do the holy Scriptures add, "and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm"? We know not, unless their divine Author graciously placed this on record as a comfort and assurance to all who are overtaken by the storms so often encountered on the voyage of life.

When any of us are overtaken by cares and anxieties, we should bear in mind who it is that is at the helm of our affairs, and trustingly look to Him—not asleep as on the Sea of Tiberias, but at the right hand of God, sleeplessly caring for us.

However smooth the sea of life may now be,

we must not suppose that it will remain unruffled during our passage across it. Sorrow, in some of its various forms, is the sad inheritance of us all. Come it certainly will, in one form or another, and we should expect it and be prepared for it. If blessed with the companionship of our dear Lord, we shall safely reach the opposite shore, whatever storms may be encountered on the way.

Two blind men are sitting by the wayside. They hear that Jesus is passing, and call to Him, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, *Thou* Son of David." Though rebuked by the multitude, they cease not to implore His help. Jesus stops to ask, "What will ye that I shall do unto you?" It is sight that they most need, and this they plead for and at once obtain. It is pleasant to read that they no sooner received their sight than they "followed Him." We may all learn a profitable lesson from their having done so.

The prayer, not the words, but the prayer, "Have mercy on me, O Lord," will remove darkness from the souls of all who sincerely offer it. We must ask for light, as did these wayside pleaders, before it will burst upon us. We must plant the seed before we can enjoy the fruit. The blind men heard that Jesus was passing. Though they

could not see Him they believed in Him, and appealed to Him for help. The spiritually blind must ask before they can receive. They must seek before they can find. Finding comes after seeking, not before doing so. "Seek, and ye shall find," is the conditional promise.

We confess that we are startled at the first view of the picture of a distressed Canaanitish woman pleading for her afflicted daughter.

Pathetic as is the cry, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, *Thou* Son of David," Jesus apparently does not heed her. "He answered her not a word." "Send her away," urge the disciples. Nothing daunted, she draws nearer to Christ, and worships Him. "Lord, help me," is her prayer. "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast *it* to dogs," is an answer that would have frozen her heart had her faith not been equal to this severe test, as is proved by her touching reply. "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." There is naught of harshness or indifference here. It is but the crucible proving the golden faith of the suppliant.

CHAPTER VI.

He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.—

JOHN 1:11.

“Forever on Thy burdened heart
A weight of sorrow hung,
Yet no ungentle, murmuring word
Escaped Thy silent tongue.
Thy foes might hate, despise, revile,
Thy friends unfaithful prove:
Unwearied in forgiveness still,
Thy heart could only love.”

WERE it stated elsewhere than in the Bible that the people attempted to stone the Son of God within the sacred walls of His temple, it would scarcely be credited, though we have so many proofs of their hatred of Him. Regardless of person and place, they thus gave loose rein to their passions, and would have put Him to death there had He not disappeared from their sight in some mysterious way. His time had not yet come, His work was not yet finished, nor was He to lay down His life in so hallowed a spot.

Though in the act of escaping from such shameful abuse, and fleeing for life, His love for those in distress is paramount. Self is lost sight of when others can be relieved. Passing a poor

blind man, He voluntarily stops to render assistance; He is not even asked to bestow pity or aid. "He SAW a man which was blind from *his* birth." That was quite enough. Unsolicited, He approaches the blind man and anoints his eyes with clay, and tells him to "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." This command was unaccompanied by any direct or indirect promise of cure, nor was the blind man's faith challenged as in so many other cases. "He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing." By this brief but comprehensive record of him we learn that the man "went." He did not delay to question or doubt results. And where did he go? "*His* way." He at once made God's way *his* way. And why? "Therefore"—because so commanded by Christ. That was quite enough to induce him to carry out the instructions given him. Jesus had told him to go,—*therefore*, he went. He could have no better reason for going to Siloam's pool, and desired none. Arriving there, he did as he was told to do—he "washed." This much he could do for himself, and he gladly did it. Did the story end here, it would be a grand record of the one to whom it refers. But it has a glorious termination. He no sooner receives his sight—a blessing he had never before enjoyed, for he was born blind—

than he hastens back to where he left Christ, a true and fearless worker in His cause. It is to be hoped that not many read the description given of this man and of his allegiance to Christ, as recorded in the ninth chapter of Saint John's Gospel, without having their hearts stirred by so touching a recital. Such a sudden transition from pitiable and helpless blindness, to zealous advocacy of Christ and His cause, merits thoughtful and frequent study. His defence of the cause he had just espoused, and his timely and earnest appeal, "Will ye also be His disciples?" rank him among the faithful preachers of righteousness; and he will continue to effectively preach to all thoughtful readers of the Scriptures, till the end of time.

There is an indescribable joy in looking at the Saviour as we see Him cared for and happy at Bethany, the loved and ever-welcome guest of Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus. The man of sorrows experienced but little of such happiness while on earth. Though "He came unto His own," and on an errand so full of mercy and love, "His own received Him not." "He was despised and rejected of men." Their hearts and doors were, with but few exceptions, closed against

Him. This would make the unfailing love and companionship of the Bethany family the more prized by Him.

Ere long a cloud overshadows that united and happy family. Lazarus is ill, and the distressed sisters, seeking comfort from the fountain-head, hasten to inform Christ of his sickness. Their message to Him is a peculiarly tender one: "He whom Thou lovest is sick." It contains no appeal for aid from the heavenly Physician; their confidence in Him renders this unnecessary. They believe it to be all-sufficient to communicate the fact of their brother's illness. Jesus receives this message, but does not respond to it. Is their confidence in Him misplaced? This cannot be. Lazarus dies and is buried. Jesus knows all that is transpiring in the house of mourning, and yet He keeps away; He does not even attend the funeral. Four days elapse after the burial of Lazarus before He sees the weeping sisters; but their faith in Him has not been lessened. "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died; but I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* Thee," is the welcome with which Martha greets Him. It is not enough to tell her that her brother would "rise again"; she knew and believed the story of "the resurrection

at the last day"; but there is a depth in this mystery of the resurrection that had not yet been fathomed. It was to teach and prove this that Jesus so long kept away from His afflicted friends. Lazarus must, in the natural order of events, sicken and die, and he must remain in the grave long enough for the body to undergo the first stages of corruption, in order to give unmistakable proof of death. This having been accomplished, Jesus goes to the grave of His departed friend and weeps over it. Some who witness His grief ask why it was that He who could open the eyes of the blind, could not have prevented the death of so loved a friend. He could have done so, but He was about to open the eyes of all present to a yet greater miracle—His power over death. The dead must hear His voice and obey Him. At His command the grave must give up its dead. He utters the command, and Lazarus is restored to life.

The inscription over this picture is, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Christ's love of children manifested itself on several occasions. Though often grieved, and from various causes, it is but once stated in the

Bible that He was "displeased," and that was when the disciples rebuked those who brought little children to Him for His touch and blessing. He was "much displeased."

Using little children to illustrate His teachings about the kingdom of heaven proved how much He prized them. This is not to be wondered at, when we think of the many that were slain at the time of His birth, and because of it, by order of Herod.

Christ placing a little child in the midst of His disciples, in order to answer their question as to who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, is an instructive and interesting picture. His "Suffer little children to come unto Me" appeals with unabated force to all parents and guardians of to-day.

Jerusalem, "the holy city," "the city of God," though "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth," presents a truly sorrowful picture. At first all is bright and promising. Christ enters the city followed by "a very great multitude," who spread their garments and tree branches in the way, and proclaim, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord." Yes! and "blessed" too would have been the

inhabitants of that favored city, had they been true to their privileges. But another and very different shout is heard. Their "hosannas" are soon followed by the diabolical cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him." "All the chief priests and elders of the people" have taken "counsel against Jesus to put Him to death." "Why, what evil hath He done?" is asked by the governor; but they attempt no reply to the question. Pilate proclaims that he had examined the accused, and could find no fault in Him; yet, maddened by their passions, they persist in clamoring for His blood. He seeks their eternal life, and they seek His death. What a fearful price was paid for our sins! "The Just for the unjust" might well be given as the name of this sad picture. Is there a lesson to be learned from it? Yes! if it is with individuals as with communities that do not profit by their advantages. May it never be said of any of us, "How often would I, . . . and ye would not"!

CHAPTER VII.

This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.—

1 COR. 11 : 25.

“Bread of the world, in mercy broken,
Wine of the soul, in mercy shed ;
By whom the words of life were spoken,
And in whose death our sins are dead ;
Look on the heart by sorrow broken,
Look on the tears by sinners shed,
And be Thy feast to us the token
That by Thy grace our souls are fed.”

As a brief sketch of some of the incidents in the life of Christ is all that is contemplated in this little volume, we will hasten on without even a passing glance at many of the Bible pictures which it would be profitable to study at our leisure. There is a sadness connected with some which we would gladly escape. That of the wretched betrayer, covenanting with the high priests to sell his Lord, is one of the number, and one of the most distressing.

Peter and John are sent to “the large upper room,” to make ready the passover. Jesus and His disciples follow, and partake of the paschal lamb in the customary manner. The Saviour then immediately institutes what is known

as "The Lord's Supper," using the bread and wine which had been prepared for the passover; thereby substituting the one for the other. The paschal lamb had long been the type of the Lamb of God, but now the substance takes the place of the shadow.

Whenever we assemble at the table of our Lord, to partake of the emblems of His dying love, we should remember that we have a direct personal interest in that service. It was for us, not Himself, the Saviour died. Not to thus commemorate His death, as directed by Him, is to disobey His command, "This do in remembrance of Me," and to incur a responsibility many would fain believe they avoided by absenting themselves from such services. It is impossible to conceive of a sadder delusion. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." There are sins of omission as well as of commission.

Let us tread lightly as we approach, and reverently glance at our blessed Lord alone in Gethsemane, from whence comes forth that agonizing prayer, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me!" He had taken with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and made known to them His intense grief, and asked their sympathy and support. "My soul is exceeding

sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with Me." We should suppose that these specially-chosen disciples would have faithfully responded to such a plea; but no! The Saviour had gone only a short distance from them, to offer up, alone, the most agonizing prayer that ever reached heaven, and returned to them for comfort and support, but found them asleep. "What! could ye not watch with Me one hour?" is His gentle rebuke. We can have no conception of the sense of utter loneliness that came over our dear Lord at this time, probably the darkest hour of His life. His exclamation, "What!" contains vastly more than any finite mind can comprehend.

Returning the second time, He again found the disciples asleep, but did not awake them. "He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time," after which He joined His still-sleeping disciples, and informed them that the hour was at hand in which He would be betrayed into the hands of His enemies. "While He yet spake," Judas approached, followed by a great multitude armed with swords and staves, sent by the chief priests and elders of the people to arrest Him as though He were a "thief," to use His own expression. Were it possible to intensify such suf-

fering, to be betrayed by the kiss of a pretended friend must have deepened the wound.

Behold the Lamb of God as He is led to Annas, and then to Caiaphas the high priest. Who can gaze upon these heartrending scenes without deep emotion? Our Lord and Saviour cruelly smitten and disgracefully mocked! Blindfolded and struck in the face, He is asked to prophesy who it was that smote Him. In the midst of this sorrow, Peter deliberately and repeatedly denies Him, as though He were not enduring agony enough from His openly-avowed enemies. To add to His distress all His disciples forsook Him.

Christ forsaken is indeed a sad picture. He knew full well the utter desolation of loneliness when He made us the gracious promise, "*I will never leave you, nor forsake you.*" A promise sure to be kept, and one that should comfort us under all circumstances.

The Lamb of God is next seen in the judgment hall with Pilate, who, though he knows Him to be "the King of the Jews," treats Him as a slave by scourging Him, according to their custom, before delivering Him to be crucified, that He might thereby be the more despised.

The whole band of soldiers gather around Jesus

and bow before Him. They proclaim Him "King of the Jews." But this is all in mockery. True He is robed in purple and wears a crown, but it is a crown of thorns, and His sceptre is a reed.

The next picture of our Lord presents Him bearing His cross, on His way to Golgotha.

We will not dwell upon His crucifixion; the driving of the nails into His hands and feet; the piercing of His side; the vinegar and the gall; the soldiers casting lots for His garments; the faithful, loving women gathered at the cross; their mourning over events which they cannot comprehend, and which can only be explained by the saying, "The Scriptures must be fulfilled."

What an inexpressibly sad and depressing picture is that of our dear Lord nailed to the cross; a malefactor on either side, crucified with Him!

We would naturally suppose that His mission on earth was accomplished now that He is about to die. But it was not so. He had yet an important work to accomplish before He could say, "It is finished."

"The saddest day hath gleam of light,
The darkest wave hath bright foam near it,
And twinkles through the cloudiest night
Some solitary star to cheer it."

A truly glorious light shone through the greater than Egyptian darkness of this sad and eventful day.

God's willingness to forgive sin at the eleventh or last hour had yet to be made manifest, and the Saviour of sinners, though in extreme bodily and mental anguish, is to furnish that proof. It has been said that one such proof has been given that no sinner need despair, and only the one that none may presume.

One of the malefactors had asked our Lord to save him, but he did not ask in a proper manner nor from proper motives. He "railed" on Jesus and doubted His Messiahship. "If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us," was his language. The other malefactor rebuked the impiety of his companion, and asked him, in evident astonishment, if he did not fear God. He also acknowledged the justness of the punishment they were both receiving, but declared that Christ had "done nothing amiss."

It is worthy of notice that the penitent malefactor confessed his sins, and pleaded *for* Christ before he pleaded with Him. He seems to have had no doubt as to who Christ was, nor as to what He could do for him. Without an "if" of any kind, he prays, "Lord, remember me when Thou

comest into Thy kingdom." His argument appears to have been, I cannot expect Thee to think of me, or do anything for me, now that Thou art in such bodily torture; but that will soon be over, and Thou wilt then pass into Thine own glorious and eternal kingdom. *Then*, blessed Lord, remember me. Thou knowest all things. All my sins are before Thee. I confess my wickedness and the justice of the punishment I am enduring. Remember me as a sinner, without a ray of hope except through Thine infinite mercy. Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. I know that Thou canst rescue me, and I trust Thee to do it in Thine own way, and in Thine own good time; only, Lord, remember me and forgive me. How brief, and yet how full of mercy, was Christ's reply!—"Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise."

It is quite unnecessary to enter into any argument as to whether or not this appeal for mercy came from one who had before seen or heard Christ, or as to the means by which he recognized his divine Lord in the person of the sufferer at his side. It is sufficient that he uttered the prayer of faith, and that the Saviour was so satisfied with it as to at once pardon him, and promise him eternal life.

This is the last appeal made to Christ before His death. He took that redeemed soul with Him to heaven as a trophy, evidencing that His work on earth was accomplished.

The Jews endeavored to lower Christ to the level of the criminals at His side, and consequently consigned all three to a like death of shame. It was furthest from their wish or expectation that the majesty and mercy of an Almighty God should be made manifest in our dying Saviour; and that a despised thief, whom they considered too vile to live, should by Him be given eternal life. God, in this case as in many others, made the wrath of man to praise Him; and turned what was intended as an insult to the Holy One into a glorification of Him.

What poor sinner, conscious of his guilt, be his sins ever so many or ever so great, need, in the light of this picture, hesitate in going to Christ for pardon? The prisoner in his dungeon, the criminal on the gallows, the profligate—however far off he may have wandered—may at the last moment look to the same loving Saviour in the same trusting spirit, and secure the same glorious reward.

CHAPTER VIII.

I have glorified Thee on the earth : I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do.—JOHN 17 : 4.

“Privations, sorrows, bitter scorn,
The life of toil, the mean abode,
The faithless kiss, the crown of thorn,—
Are these the consecrated road?
'Twas thus He suffered, though a Son,
Foreknowing, choosing, feeling all,
Until the perfect work was done,
And drunk the bitter cup of gall.”

THE last words of our blessed Redeemer were uttered while He was agonizing on the cross, and were addressed to God the Father. We may venture to quote them, but there is a sacredness about them which forbids our commenting upon them with feelings other than of profound reverence. “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.” Having completed the work of redemption, He thus surrendered His commission; He “yielded up the ghost.”

No wonder that the veil of the temple was rent in twain; no wonder that the earth quaked, and that the rocks were torn asunder; no wonder that the centurion and they that were with him,

watching Jesus, exclaimed, "Truly this was the Son of God."

We must now take our last look at the Lamb of God. We see His lifeless body removed from the cross by Joseph of Arimathæa, and by him carefully placed in his own sepulchre. It is our farewell look at Him. The Lamb of God will never again be seen in His earthly condition. True, there are the seal and the guard. The command of Pilate, "Make" the sepulchre "as sure as ye can," has been fully obeyed. All that the ingenuity and hatred of man could devise has been done. Every precaution has been taken against the removal of the dead Christ from the tomb. His disciples cannot come by night and steal Him away, however much they might desire to make it appear that He had "risen from the dead."

The devout women, while on their way to anoint the body of their crucified yet loved Lord, mournfully question as to who will remove for them the obstruction at the entrance of the tomb; but they nevertheless hasten to it in faith, and well they may, for as if in mockery of all attempts to thwart the decrees of God, a messenger whom no Roman guard, however vigilant, can resist, approaches. An angel descends

from heaven, commissioned to roll back the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and yield it must. The seal must break at his touch, and give free access to those approaching on an errand of mercy. To their dismay they find, on reaching the tomb, that the Lamb of God is not there. It is tenantless. He who had gone forth from that sepulchre was not Christ as the Lamb of God, but Christ as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. The Lamb had been sacrificed, and there was to be no more sacrifice for sin. The prophecies concerning "the Nazarene" had all been fulfilled. The atonement He made for sin had been accepted. The opening of His sepulchre symbolized the opening of the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Sin had long entombed the whole human race; but it is now robbed of its power, and all who will may have eternal life through Him who is "the resurrection and the life."

Our Lord's repeated appearances after His crucifixion gave undisputed proof that He had risen from the dead. The Roman guard may say that His disciples "stole Him *away* while we slept"; but they make no attempt to deny His resurrection. That He was alive again could not be questioned. Even the doubting disciple who was

so fully resolved that he would not credit the story of the resurrection until he had seen and felt the wounded side and hands, is made to exclaim, "My Lord and my God."

In order to form some idea of the extent of Christ's love for us, we must bear in mind that when He undertook to redeem us by giving Himself a sacrifice for our sins, He knew full well all that He would have to endure on our account. All the ignominy that would be heaped upon Him, and the intensity of His bodily and mental anguish, were as clearly realized by Him before He was laid in His manger-cradle at Bethlehem as at the time the sufferings were upon Him. The finite mind can but imperfectly grasp this subject. To form even a remote idea of the sufferings of Christ, we must reflect upon them, not as viewed from our standpoint, but as comprehended in all their intensity by a pure and holy God. As best we can we must consider the height from which His enemies would fain have dragged Him. By as much as it exceeds that of the loftiest and purest of human beings, by so much does heaven exceed earth.

Many a brave man fearlessly meets danger when encountered in the path of duty, but always

with the hope, if not the expectation, that in some way or to some extent the threatened evil may be averted. It was not so with our Saviour. He knew all, even the anguish that would wring from Him the expiring cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" His manliness ranks next to His godliness. The most manly one ever on earth, and the most noble; yet, in view of this acknowledged fact, the mention of His name or of His cause, unless it be in a place set apart for religious worship, however judiciously spoken, is too often considered out of place, and produces embarrassment, if it does not give offence.

There is no semblance of weakness in advocating the cause of Christ in our daily life and conversation. On the contrary, it is a proof of manliness to do so. Cowardice and timidity seal the lips, and one should blush not to be a soldier of the cross, rather than do so when others are true to the Captain of their salvation, and bravely discharge a soldier's duty.

"Ashamed of Jesus! that dear Friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No! when I blush, be this my shame,
That I no more revere His name."

There would be far less infidelity to-day were

professing Christians more free to advocate a cause so supremely grand and elevating.

Notwithstanding the sad indifference with which too many treat their Saviour, all are more or less convinced of the great importance of having Him to go to in their extremity. They have an indescribable sense of relief in feeling that He will graciously heed them and do for them, when they are driven to Him. He is thus selfishly kept in reserve as a mysterious power, to act for them when they realize that they cannot do without Him, rather than loved and served as a merciful and gracious God. It does not seem to have occurred to such that God must necessarily form an all-important part of such an agreement, if any such there be. "I will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh," is one of many passages of Scripture which show that He does not assent to any such one-sided terms. He is a jealous as well as a merciful God, and has duly warned us that He will honor only those who honor Him.

However many and great the blessings which accompany us, and however attractive this life may appear to us—whatever its promises of pleasure and of profit, Christ is our only dependence for lasting peace and truest happiness. His

religion differs from all other so-called religions in that it is most available and most sustaining when most needed. All other so-called religions clearly prove their utter worthlessness when their followers most depend upon them.

The religion of Christ is not only for times of danger and of death. It is to live by as well as to die by ; for week-days as well as for Sundays ; for family circles and for social gatherings as well as for the sanctuary ; for the enjoyment of this life as well as for life eternal.

While we are free to accept or reject Christ's gracious invitation, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved," let us not forget that our freedom extends no further than this. Whether or not we look to Him as our Redeemer, we have been duly warned that we must all appear before Him as our Judge. There is no escaping that tribunal. The good and the bad must all be there. He now says that we "may" come to Him ; He will then say that we "must." The question now is, Shall we, or shall we not, accept Him ? A truly momentous question ; one that cannot be considered after death. Then it will be for Him to say whether or not He will accept us. Not that His acceptance or rejection of us will then decide our final

destiny. He will only pronounce our destiny; we are now deciding it by the lives we are living.

Nothing can be more personal than is the Christian religion. It is purely a matter between each individual soul and its God. True we may all be saved, but not as communities or as families, nor in groups of two or three; only as individuals. We live an individual life, must die an individual death, and judgment will be passed upon us as individuals. Each for himself and by himself must render his final account of the manner in which he has spent this life. None will be called upon to give an account for another, but all will be held responsible for the influences their lives have had upon the lives of others.

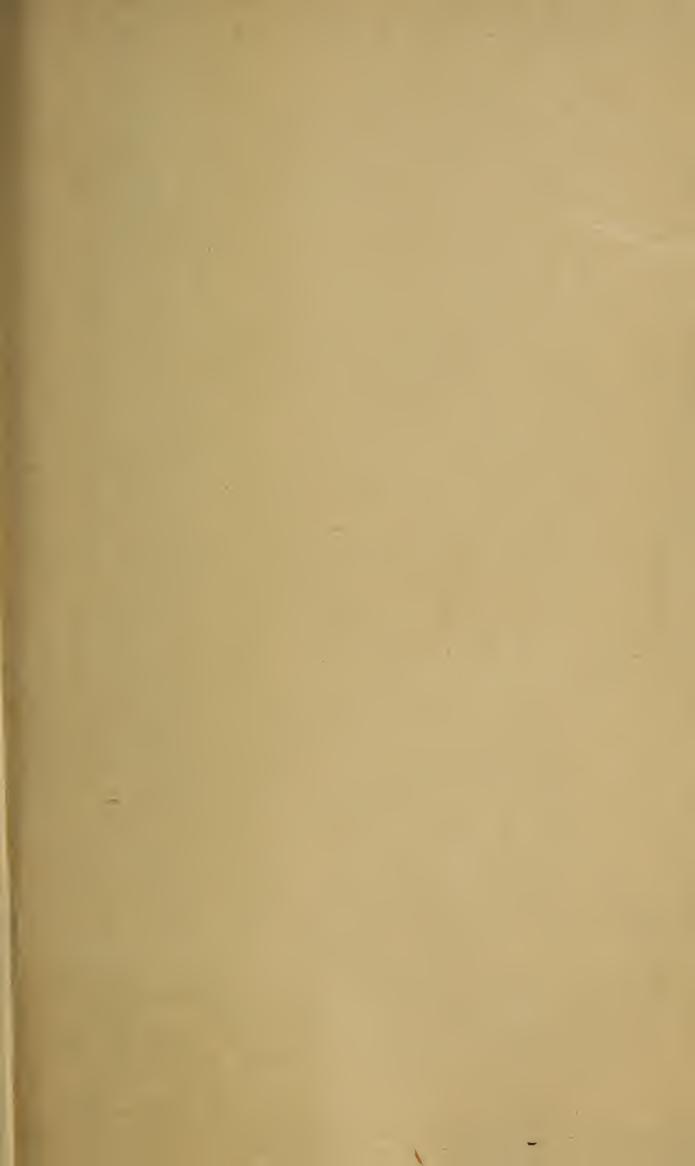
It is for us each now to answer the question, What think ye of Christ? and to decide what regard we will pay to the claims made upon us by Him who died to redeem us, and who lawfully claims us as His own. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created."—REV. 4:11.





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